

**LESSON #12**  
**THE ELDERSHIP**  
**QUALIFICATION OF ELDERS**

**TEXTS: I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:2, 3**

**INTRODUCTION:**

In the New Testament times it was God's plan that every church should have a plurality of elders to direct and oversee its members. Hence, we should try to meet God's requirements in doing His work. Without elders a church may be compared to a flock of sheep without a shepherd, or to a flock of wild geese without a leader. Every man who has any leadership ability should begin early in life to develop those fine qualities, which are required in a man to be an elder in the Lord's Church.

In our lesson today let us study the elders in the church, their qualifications, duties, and our duties to them.

Qualification defined: Any endowment or acquirement, which fits a person for a place, office or employment.

A condition that must be complied with for the attainment, of a status...such as the qualifications for citizenship.

In order to be an elder, one must willingly accept the work (**I Peter 5:2**). Men should not have to be begged to accept the office of the eldership.

It is not an uncommon sight to see people gathered around trying to get a man to accept a place in the eldership. One should accept it willingly and do the work with the same spirit.

**1. BLAMELESS**

- a. One against whom an evil charge cannot be sustained.
- b. Does not mean perfection (**Romans 3:23; I John 1:8-10**).

**2. THE HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE**

- a. A bishop must not have more than one living wife.
- b. He must have one wife.

**3. VIGILANT**

- a. Keen, courageous, wary watchfulness in sense of right.
- b. Concerning selves and members.

**4. SOBER**

- a. Not affected by passion or prejudice; well balanced.
- b. Not go off half-cocked.
- c. Use good common sense.

**5. OF GOOD BEHAVIOR**

- a. A well ordered life.
- b. Good manners, courteous, polite, orderly, modest.
- c. Not rude with no regard for feelings of others, or unwilling to be agreeable.

**6. GIVEN TO HOSPITALITY**

- a. Kindness, generosity to strangers, or guests at home or at the services.

**7. APT TO TEACH**

- a. Teach means to impart knowledge.
- b. They are to feed the flock.

**8. NOT GIVEN TO WINE**

- a. Not to indulge in the use of strong drink.
- b. Allow nothing to unbalance mind and body.

**9. NO STRIKER**

- a. Not quarrelsome

**10. NOT GREEDY OF FILTHY LUCRE**

- a. Not seeking gain through base, or dishonorable means.
- b. Not illegitimate business.

**11. PATIENT**

- a. Fair, mild, gentle.

**12. NOT A BRAWLER**

- a. Not a wrangler, but quiet and peaceable.
- b. Not a loud, noisy quarreler, one who disagrees, displaying great emotion.

**13. NOT COVETOUS**

- a. No lover of money.
- b. To have a desire for, long for.

**14. RULE WELL HIS OWN HOUSE**

- a. House refers to whole family.
- b. Submit to one's control.
- c. Head of the house.

**15. NOT A NOVICE**

- a. A new convert
- b. One incapable of responsibility.

**16. OF GOOD REPORT FROM WITHOUT**

## **DUTIES OF ELDERS**

The word bishop means overseer, one who plans and directs the work of the church. The word pastor has about the same meaning as the word shepherd. Both of these terms are used as they apply to the care and oversight of the members of the church.

This brings us to the next part of our lesson what are the duties of the elders?

1. The eldership is a work and not merely an official position, yet carries authority **(Romans 12:4,5; I Timothy 3:1)**.

The elder in God's Church was never meant to be a law-giver in the absence of the revealed law of God.

Elders are to rule the church, according to the Will of God. The magnitude of their responsibility is expressed in **Hebrews 13:17**.

They that rule well are of double honor **(I Timothy 5:15)**.

### **2. SELF-DISCIPLINE**

- a. Acts 20:28
- b. Examine selves and see if their lives conform to the requirements of elders and Christians. Example.

### **3. WATCH - CARE OVER THE CONGREGATION**

- a. Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2, 3
- b. Lead, know, protect, feed, the sheep.

### **4. TEACH THE WORD OF GOD.**

### **5. EXHORT AND CONVINC THE GAINSAYERS.**

- a. Titus 1:9
- b. Those who tear down instead of built up.

## **DUTIES OF MEMBERS**

Let's now turn the picture around and view it from a different angle by considering the duty of the members to the elders **(I Thessalonians 5:12,13)**.

1. **MUST OBEY THEM (Hebrews 13:17).**
2. **NOT REBUKE (I Timothy 5:1). a. One advanced in years.**
3. **RECEIVE NOT AN ACCUSATION (1 Timothy 5:19).**

Members should recognize the responsibility of the elders to watch in behalf of their souls, and they should cooperate as the elders seek to feed them, to tend them, or to help them with spiritual problems.